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# THE CHRONOLOGICAL SCHEME OF ACTS

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THE article 'Chronology of the New Testament' by C. H. Turner in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* marks an epoch in this important subject. Its astronomical and calendar data are indeed not unimpeachable, for the more recent studies of Fotheringham<sup>1</sup> make it highly probable that A.D. 30 should be taken as the year of the crucifixion, rather than Turner's date of A.D. 29. But Turner's careful survey of ancient sources proves that from a very early time "the year of the two Gemini" (A.D. 29) was fixed upon by tradition, and became the accepted starting-point for primitive reckonings in both directions. Convenience of adjustment to the paschal cycle had probably much to do with the adoption of this particular year, which facilitated harmonization; but at the very early period to which it can be carried back tradition is not likely to have varied more than a year or two from the correct date for so all-important an event. While, then, a slightly earlier or later absolute dating, such as A.D. 30, may obtain the preference of modern chronographers it seems not impossible that the traditional date of 29 A.D. for the crucifixion may go back to the period of Luke himself.<sup>2</sup>

A second contribution of value in the article referred to is Turner's observation (p. 421) that the picture of the Book of Acts "is cut up, as it were, into six panels, each labelled with a general summary of progress," the protagonist in the first three being St. Peter, in the last three St. Paul; so that "the two halves into which the book thus naturally falls make almost equal divisions at the middle of the whole period covered." It is no surprise to find this view of the structure of Acts adopted in so standard a work as Moffatt's *Introduction to the*

<sup>1</sup> *Journal of Philology*, xxix (1903), and *Journal of Theological Studies*, xii (1910), 45.

<sup>2</sup> The name "Luke" which tradition assigns to the author of the third Gospel and Book of Acts is employed in the present article without prejudice to the question of real authorship.

*New Testament*, for as to the division there can be no doubt, while the reader who carefully examines the recurrent rubric of Acts 6, 7; 9, 31; 12, 24; 16, 5, and 19, 20 will readily see from its relation to the context that the author really does employ it to subdivide his work according to subject matter. It seems the more surprising that in a chronological enquiry such as Turner's the critic should not first attempt to estimate the length of time required for the series of events related in each of the successive 'panels,' so as to do full justice to the Lukan chronology in and for itself, before introducing outside considerations such as the conveniences of travel, or the requirements of Paul or Josephus, in the attempt to reach an ultimate chronology. Right method would seem to suggest that we first get clearly the author's own idea before seeking to adjust it to others. Unfortunately Turner's subdivision of the story of Gentile evangelization in Acts 13-28 into periods of longer or shorter duration (p. 421b) is made almost without reference to the Lukan divisions at 12, 24; 16, 5; and 19, 20.

A recent article by Professor C. J. Cadoux in *The Journal of Theological Studies*<sup>3</sup> entitled 'The Chronological Divisions of Acts' adduces some further considerations which should be taken into the account, if Turner's discovery is to have proper valuation. Here, too, unfortunately, we can give no sweeping endorsement.

It can hardly be conceded to Cadoux that the closing sentence of the book (Acts 28, 31) should be counted as one of the 'rubrics.' Its whole tenor and purpose are different, and there is little or no resemblance even in language. More could be said for including in the series Acts 2, 47b ("And the Lord added to their number daily those that were being saved"), though even here we are inclined to attribute the clause to the source only, and to explain the resemblance of its language to the five 'refrains' from the compiler's having taken the idea — and to some extent the language — of his summary from this passage. An almost exact parallel can be found in the rubric employed by the compiler of our first Gospel in Matt. 7, 28; 11, 1; 13, 53; 19, 1, and 26, 1 to divide his five 'books' of the

<sup>3</sup> Vol. xix (1917-18), pp. 333-341.

teaching of Jesus, prefaced each by its introductory narrative, from one another and from the epilogue. A comparison of Luke 7, 1 ( $\beta$  text) taking into consideration the peculiarities of the idiom will show that the refrain is not a creation of our first evangelist, but is merely adopted (like a whole series of similarly stereotyped phrases) from the source he is following. However, even Cadoux himself does not regard Acts 1, 1–2, 47 as a separate ‘panel,’ but as merely “introductory”; and since the other addition he would make is at the end, where a natural terminus is reached anyway, his scheme for the division of Acts into seven parts does not differ at all “chronologically” and but very little otherwise, from Turner’s into six. Cadoux’s really important contribution to the subject lies elsewhere. It is a suggested explanation of the principle on which the various stages of the story have been marked off by the ‘refrain.’

Moffatt<sup>4</sup> in adopting Turner’s division had spoken of the refrain as summarizing each section “by a rubric of progress”; but he takes the word “progress” in the geographical sense. Cadoux rejects this on grounds which seem quite adequate, and reverts to the view of Turner that the stages marked off are chronological. We may venture to transcribe the extract which he makes from the well-known article:

It remains only to adjust, by the help of these points, the division into periods (see p. 421b), which is the single hint at a chronology supplied by St. Luke in the earlier part of his work. . . . That the chronology here adopted (*i.e.* Turner’s) results in a more or less even division of periods — i. from A.D. 29; ii. from A.D. 35; iii. from A.D. 39–40; iv. from A.D. 45–46; v. from A.D. 50; vi. from A.D. 55 (to A.D. 61) — such as St. Luke seems to be contemplating, must be considered a slight step towards its verification (Hastings, Dictionary of the Bible, i, p. 424).

It is also quite apparent that Turner’s dates require readjustment by reference to the well-known inscription at Delphi, from which the pro-consulship of Gallio in Achaia can be dated in A.D. 51–52. This is now commonly regarded as furnishing our most reliable *point d’appui* for the chronology of Paul. It is true, as Cadoux observes, that Turner “makes no use of it”; but this is pardonable since the discovery was not made known until six years after the appearance of his article. It is, how-

<sup>4</sup> *Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 284 f.

ever, a striking confirmation of Turner's results that his date for Paul's arrival in Corinth is less than a year later than that deduced by Deissmann from the inscription. A discussion of Pauline chronology by the present writer which appeared in the same year with Turner's came six months nearer still; but that is attributable to good luck rather than to good scholarship.<sup>5</sup> Turner himself would probably concede a correction on this ground of perhaps a year in his later dates.

If we make the slight correction required by the Delphi inscription, and in addition identify the visit of Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem of Acts 11, 30 with that which Paul also records as his *second* in Gal. 2, 1-10, as many leading scholars now demand, Turner's chronology will be verified in even higher degree than its author claims — so Cadoux maintains — by comparison with the Lukan division. For since the first and last of the *seven* 'refrains' counted by Cadoux coincide with the beginning and end of the total period, extending from the crucifixion (A.D. 29-30) to the end of Paul's stay in Rome (A.D. 59-60) the whole will consist of some thirty years, as Turner's chronology requires. Acts, like the Gospel, will cover a period of 30-31 years. But in addition — and this is the important point — the intervening five 'refrains' will appear to be so distributed by the historian as to mark off his narrative into periods of approximately five years, of which three are given to the work of Peter and the Twelve in Palestine, while the remaining three are occupied by the Gentile missions of Paul, which start from Antioch. Starting from Passover A.D. 29 these five-year periods will be reckoned as follows:

Founding of the church to Martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 6, 7) . . . . .	A.D. 29-34
Expansion in Palestine to Conversion of Paul (9, 31) . . . . .	34-39
Beginnings of Gentile Evangelization to Death of Agrippa (12, 24) . . . . .	39-44
Antiochian Missions to Distribution of Decrees (16, 5) . . . . .	44-49
Greek Missions to Founding of Ephesian Church (19, 20) . . . . .	49-54
Delegation to Jerusalem to Paul's Witness at Rome (end of Acts) . . . . .	54-59 (60)

The end of the Lukan narrative leaves the terminus of Paul's activity somewhat vague. By what event it was marked does

<sup>5</sup> See Bacon, *Introduction to New Testament*, 1900, p. 280, comparing the preliminary studies in *Expositor* V, lix, lx (November and December, 1899). The date arrived at, is "spring of 50." Deissmann's is "early in 50"; Turner's "fall of 50."

not appear; but the data of 28, 11–13 carry us on to only a month or two from the succeeding Passover, the beginning season of the series. Otherwise the summaries might be exact, and certainly coincide with principal divisions of the subject.<sup>6</sup> Moreover the third refrain, brief as it is, surpasses all in the clearness with which it coincides with a strongly marked transition. The story here passes from the apostleship of Peter among the Circumcision to the apostleship of Paul among the Gentiles. There is further good fortune in the fact that in this case we can also positively control the datings. For the narrative of Josephus also implies the summer of A.D. 44 as the date for the death of Agrippa. On the other hand we have no means of controlling the other dates save, *first*, inference from the Pauline Epistles, *second*, the requirements of time implied in Paul and in the Lukan narrative itself. Cadoux's theory of "the chronological divisions of Acts" must stand the double test, *first*, of real consonance with the Lukan grouping of material, *second* of agreement with absolute chronology.

1. The placing of the refrain in Acts 6, 7 is somewhat peculiar, since we clearly have at 6, 1 a transition in subject matter, and (in the general judgment of those who at all admit distinctions of sources used by the compiler) transition to a new source as well. With Acts 6, 1 we enter a new environment, and meet presuppositions unexplained in the preceding narrative. We also proceed to wholly new interests and a new outlook. The source-critic will be disposed to look upon this opening paragraph (6, 1–6) as largely reconstructed by the editor in the effort to adapt his extract from the new source (Antiochian?) to the narrative already framed.<sup>7</sup> The upshot of the editorial changes is that the seven Hellenistic leaders, who both by their actual work and by subsequent reference (Acts 21, 8) are really "evangelists," are transformed into subordinates to the Apostles. They relieve the twelve of the task of "serving

<sup>6</sup> On the placing of refrains 1 and 4, see below. In both cases it is necessary to distinguish the compiler's point of view from that of the sources he employs.

<sup>7</sup> See Bacon 'Stephen's Speech' in *Contributions by the Semitic and Biblical Faculty*, Yale Bicentennial Publications, 1901. The references in 6, 8 and 11, 18 suggest a special interest in Antioch.

tables," and become an order of "deacons" <sup>8</sup> in the mother church, ranking below the Apostles but above "the widows," who also now appear for the first time, and quite unexpectedly. Considering this opening paragraph (Acts 6, 1-6) to be largely bridge-work of the editorial character described, the very object of which is to minimize the gap between disparate sources by assigning a place for the new *dramatis personae* in the existing framework, it is not surprising that the retrospective summary should be postponed until the editor has completed his account of the organization of the mother church. He can proceed more appropriately thereafter with his story of the dispersal by persecution. From the point of view, then, of the ultimate compiler the refrain of Acts 6, 7 stands just where it ought. It looks back over and sums up the story of the establishment of the mother church in Jerusalem, the "church of the Apostles and Elders." The position of the fourth refrain (16, 5) seems to be chosen with equal care on similar grounds. For this story of development five years is a very reasonable time.

Again the date A.D. 34 for the outbreak of "the persecution which arose about Stephen" (8, 1; 11, 19) is probable on external grounds if sufficient allowance be made for the Lukan tendency to transform a scene of mere uncontrolled mob violence into a formal trial and condemnation before the Sanhedrin. The outbreak against Stephen and the Hellenists (Acts 8, 1 explicitly excepts "the Apostles" from its effects) would be quite conceivable in the last years of Pilate, somewhat more so than under his immediate successors. On both internal and external evidence A.D. 29-34 seems, therefore, a reasonable conception of date to have been entertained by the compiler.

2. What, then, of the period of expansion described in Acts 6-8, during which in spite of persecution the gospel was carried both northward to Samaria and southward through Philistia to the border of Egypt?

Luke concludes his story of this development with a glowing account of the conversion of the persecutor and his early witness in Damascus and Jerusalem. If the account be properly interpreted by its own implications solely, without intrusive

<sup>8</sup> The actual term appears only in the  $\beta$  text.

influence from Galatians upon our judgment of Luke's meaning, this early preaching will be understood as antedating but slightly the close of the period. Standing where it does it might possibly be regarded as falling in part within the limits of the next; for it is notoriously in Lukan style to introduce proleptically at the close of his sections material which really belongs later, but serves to carry on the thread of connection.<sup>9</sup> Here, however, no such extreme assumption is required. The natural understanding will be that Paul's conversion, beginning of work in Jerusalem, and escape through Caesarea to Tarsus fell toward the close of this period, *i.e.*, in A.D. 37-39. In order to pass upon the question whether Luke really intends his second refrain summarizing the growth of the church "throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria" (Acts 9, 31) to mark the year 39 A.D. we must here pause for some further enquiry as to the datings implied in the period of the Hellenistic persecution, in particular that of the conversion of Paul.

i. Considered in themselves, without reference to Galatians, the events related in Acts 6, 8-9, 31 would fall quite naturally and easily within the limits 34-39 A.D. This being so, we have no right to say that these were not the limits actually in the mind of Luke, even if they fail to agree with data derived from Galatians. For the wide divergence of Luke in just this portion of his work from the data of Galatians makes it quite supposable that he is here somewhat in error. On the other hand it is not wholly insupposable that current datings of Paul's conversion based on Gal. 2, 1 may be ten years out of the way, since a group of scholars are ready to adopt the conjecture of Grotius changing the reading of Gal. 2, 1 from "fourteen" to "four" years by the omission of a single *i*. The supposition, then, that Luke intends his second division to cover a period corresponding to the years 34-39 A.D. has nothing against it save the unwarranted assumption that he must agree with the date for Paul's conversion implied in Gal. 2, 1.

ii. Paul's escape from Damascus as related in Acts 9, 23-25 is referred to by himself in 2 Cor. 11, 32 as having taken place

<sup>9</sup> So Luke 24, 44-53, with which compare Acts 1, 6-9. Acts 11, 30 is susceptible of similar interpretation.



while the city was being guarded by the ethnarch "under Aretas the king." Not one of the interpretations thus far proposed is wholly successful in removing the difficulty in understanding how this could be possible at any date earlier than 37-38 A.D., when Damascus probably did pass into the control of Aretas. Under Roman control, which can be traced with certainty from its coinage down to A.D. 33-34, and on other less cogent evidence down to the second summer of Caligula's reign (A.D. 38), Paul the Roman citizen would hardly have been forced to such ignominious means of egress. So far as the Epistles are concerned there is no need to connect this escape with Paul's stay in Damascus *immediately* following his conversion. It might equally well be assigned to the subsequent period of which he writes in Gal. 1, 17, "Again I *returned* to Damascus." But Acts connects it with the conversion. According to the exact sense of Acts 9, 23 it was only "some days" (*ἡμέραι ἱκαναί*) afterward. The time was in fact so short that when the fugitive reached Jerusalem the astounding news of his conversion to the faith he set out to persecute had not even then been conveyed to the brotherhood. Between this escape and the escape from Jerusalem, Luke inserts nothing but Paul's interrupted work to the Hellenists of that city. Is it not reasonable to suppose that he really means to date the conversion of Paul in A.D. 37-38, even if he did not know that Damascus was then "under Aretas the king"?

iii. Were we at liberty to alter the reading of Gal. 2, 1 from 'fourteen' to 'four' years the terminal dates of the Pauline chronology would easily fall in line with Acts, however wide the discrepancy as to the nature of the Apostle's work before coming to Antioch and as to the intervening date of his first visit to Jerusalem. As already suggested we must either throw out altogether the Lukan report of a 'famine-relief' visit, or identify it, as Paul's *second*, with that of Gal. 2, 1-10. For the idea (still maintained by Turner) that Paul could pass over such a visit unmentioned in Gal. 1, 18-24 is inadmissible. On this point even champions of Lukan infallibility are at last willing to concede something to Paul. The occasion referred to in Acts 11, 30 and Gal. 2, 1 must be the same; but what of the

difference as to agenda? An answer to this question will involve some discussion of Luke's relation to his sources.

Of all the sections of Acts the four verses here concerned (11, 27-30) are among the least reliable. From verse 22 we expect action of some sort on the question of the admission of Gentiles, for this was the object of Barnabas' mission to Antioch. Paul, in Gal. 2, 1-10, gives exactly what we should expect; but Luke gives something else. He defers the settlement of the pending question of the admission of uncircumcised Gentiles till after the First Missionary Journey (Acts 13-14), when Paul and Barnabas on an alleged *third* visit to Jerusalem can meet the objections raised by the Mosaists with an appeal like that of Peter in 11, 1-18 to "the signs and wonders God had wrought through them among the Gentiles." This first section (verses 1-11) of Luke's story of the Apostolic Council is in fact little else than a parallel in the compiler's own words to the story told by his source in 11, 1-18 (cf.  $\beta$  text). Acts 15, 1-11 could easily be reconciled with Paul if it stood in the place now occupied by 11, 27-30. The rest of the story of the Council tells of a settlement, by means of the four "decrees" adopted at the instance of James, of the further question on what basis believing "Jews which are among the Gentiles" are to 'eat and associate' with their Gentile brethren. All are to be protected from "the pollutions of idols" by certain rules of "abstinence." The difficulty of reconciling this with Paul's account of his controversy with Peter at Antioch, and with his uniform treatment of the issue at stake, is notorious. But one could hardly expect an Antiochian writer<sup>10</sup> whose attitude toward Peter and James is that displayed in Acts to tell the story as Gal. 2, 11-21 reveals it. If, however, the whole question was to Luke's mind determined by the "decrees" proposed by James at the council of "the Apostles and Elders" at Jerusalem, it seems probable that he would assign another motive for the visit recorded in 11, 22 ff.

What then, of this story of famine-relief? Its chief actor is a

<sup>10</sup> Very ancient tradition recorded in the Old Latin prologues, and referred to by Eusebius, makes the author a native of Antioch. The tradition is strongly corroborated by the internal evidence.

prophet named Agabus, who came down from Jerusalem to Antioch and predicted "a great famine over all the world (*οἰκουμένη*), which came to pass in the days of Claudius." Agabus is known to us from the most reliable of Luke's sources in 21, 10-12. But, here, in the Travel Document, where Agabus meets Paul at Caesarea with an entreaty not to imperil his life at Jerusalem, he appears as a previously unknown character. He must be introduced to the reader as "a certain prophet." Moreover there is no indication that he has ever met Paul before, or even visited Antioch. He "came down from Judaea." Equally unreliable is the story of church action which takes the place in Acts occupied in the Pauline Epistles by the great contribution of the Greek churches "for the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem" (Rom. 15, 26). The Antioch church may possibly have followed the famous example of the royal convert Helena of Adiabene in 45-46, and may have made Barnabas and Saul bearers of its gift. But this was not the main occasion for the journey; nor was it *this* contribution, but that of the Pauline churches, which called for mention at the hands of an impartial historian.

Again we may assume, in order to meet the implications of Luke's order, that there was another famine in 40-41.<sup>10a</sup> But it fails to appear in any other record, unless the *assiduae sterilitates* which according to Suetonius distinguished the reign of Claudius are called in to aid. The famine made memorable to all Jews as well by its severity as by the liberality of Helena began at least a year after the death of Agrippa, extending over the procuratorship of Tiberius Alexander (46-47), after having started under his predecessor, Cuspius Fadus (45-46). Luke may have been misled by the Aramaic word ארעא ('land,' or 'earth') as Torrey conjectures, into regarding the famine as world-wide (*οἰκουμένη*); but he certainly misconceives its extent, since if it had not been limited to Palestine Antioch would have been no better off than Jerusalem, and (unless we take refuge in our ignorance by assuming some other famine) he is equally at sea regarding its date. For he takes pains to insert the mission of Paul and Barnabas to relieve it *before* his

<sup>10a</sup> So Harnack.

account of the persecution and death of Agrippa, under the vague statement that it "came to pass in the days of Claudius," while the return of the envoys accompanied by Mark <sup>11</sup> is related immediately *after*. Luke seems thus to have a perfectly correct idea of the date of Agrippa's death, with which he interlocks very closely the visit of Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem; but he has a very vague idea of the date of the famine, as he indicates by introducing his digression to tell the fortunes of the mother church with the words "Now about that time" (κατ' ἐκεῖνον δὲ τὸν καιρὸν). Doubtless he knew the date of Agrippa's accession (41) "in the days of Claudius," but he does not seem to recognize the persecution as an *initial* policy. He thinks of the famine as occurring *ca.* A.D. 43-44, and therefore places the delegation from Antioch before the account of Agrippa's persecution and death. But by placing the return of the envoys *after* the royal demise he indicates his belief that this, at all events, was not earlier than the end of 44. Now if his refrain is really intended to divide the story chronologically into (approximate) pentads his date for the conversion of Paul will be, as we have seen, A.D. 37-38. His date for the visit to Jerusalem will be 44-45. It is certainly noteworthy that this should agree so closely with Gal. 2, 1 as emended. For if we read here 'four' instead of 'fourteen,' and count both termini (as the rule of antiquity requires) in the intervals named in Gal. 1, 18 and 2, 1, Paul also will be reckoning six years from his conversion to his visit with Barnabas to Jerusalem; and this on other grounds cannot be dated far from A.D. 44-45, where Luke seems to place it.

Finally the date of "fourteen years" in 2 Cor. 12, 2 will be found to fall in quite as smoothly with this Lukan scheme. The passage in question belongs to the last months of Paul's stay in Ephesus <sup>12</sup> or slightly later. By Turner's dating, corrected in conformity to the Delphi inscription, this would be *ca.* 54-55, bringing the vision referred to into the period of

<sup>11</sup> Mentioned in the source (12, 12) in the phrase Luke employs in 12, 25, "John whose surname was Mark."

<sup>12</sup> On the supposition that 2 Cor. 10, 1-13, 10 is a fragment of the painful letter of self-commendation referred to in 2 Cor. 2, 3-9; 3, 1.

Paul's stay in "Arabia" (Gal. 1, 17). It might even be brought into a certain correspondence with Luke's account of a vision in the temple (Acts 22, 17-21), since both would mark the beginning of Paul's ministry to the Gentiles. In all respects save the inconvenient 1 of Gal. 2, 1 the date A.D. 39 (in absolute reckoning 40) for the retrospective rubric Acts 9, 31 is unexceptionable.

It does *not* follow that we are at liberty to make the emendation. The business of the exegete is not to change his texts, but to interpret them. Moreover the Grotian emendation falls very far short of removing the discrepancies between Acts 9, 1-30 and Gal. 1, 11-24. On the one side we have a ministry to (Greek-speaking) Jews in Judaea (Jerusalem-Caesarea); on the other a ministry to the Gentiles in "Syria and Cilicia." On the one side a flight from Damascus, after "some days" witness for Christ in the synagogues, to the mother church in Jerusalem; on the other an express denial of "going up to Jerusalem to those that were Apostles before me," and a going away into Arabia, followed (one would infer shortly) by a "return to Damascus." On the one side a work of evangelization among the Greek-speaking Jews in Jerusalem in constant relation with the leaders of the mother church interrupted only by the outbreak (stereotyped in Luke) of Jewish jealousy in mob violence;<sup>13</sup> on the other a work of evangelization in Damascus lasting for three years (minus the stay in Arabia), and terminated by a two-weeks' visit privately to Peter in Jerusalem. On the one side a flight from Jerusalem to Caesarea and a stay there under protection of the church until "the brethren" send the fugitive to his native city of Tarsus; on the other missionary activity "in Syria and Cilicia" in such complete independence of the churches of Christ in Judaea<sup>14</sup> that the Apostle's very face was unknown to them. "They only heard by report, He that once persecuted us now preacheth the faith of which he once made havoc." As respects the nature and sphere of Paul's activity the disagreement could hardly be

<sup>13</sup> Not to be reconciled with Acts 22, 17-21, where Paul's departure is occasioned by a vision in the temple forestalling the outbreak.

<sup>14</sup> In Pauline usage "Judaea" includes Caesarea, the principal port, and metropolis of Samaria.

greater. The author of Acts is certainly not well informed on this part of Paul's career, and has exactly the opposite idea as to how his apostolic authority should be vindicated. It does not follow that Luke may not have conceived the conversion as having taken place in A.D. 37-38. If the Grotian emendation were admitted the interval assumed by Acts 11, 30; 12, 25 of six (?) years between the conversion and the second visit would be substantially correct. Looking back, then, over this 'panel' of Acts, its evidence must be held to confirm Cadoux's theory, that (whether correctly or not) the author employs his retrospective rubrics for the purpose of subdividing his story into periods of *five* years. His second period, that of the spread of the gospel throughout "Judaea, Samaria, and Galilee" in consequence of "the persecution that arose about Stephen," is brought to a signal close by the conversion of the arch-persecutor, and a brief season (one year?) of "peace." He may well have conceived it to end with the first decade from the crucifixion, in A.D. 39; for which we may substitute 40 if the crucifixion be dated in 30.

3. The next 'panel' (9, 32-12, 24), which closed, as we have seen, with the persecution and death of Agrippa, covers the beginnings of (sporadic) Gentile conversions under Peter, and includes the founding of the church in Antioch. So far as internal indications go it might well be taken to require about five years in the view of the narrator. Certainly the event which brings it to so dramatic an end must be dated, as we have seen, in the summer of 44. In reality Agrippa's death took place but fourteen years and some months after the crucifixion, if we are right in dating the latter in 30 A.D. But as Luke seems to date it in 29 he probably counts fifteen and a fraction for the whole period, and five for the present 'panel' as well as for each of the two preceding. As the ultimate terminus falls about February 1 according to Acts 28, 11, 30, the entire story covers more nearly 31 than 30 years; but if the author considers the fractional ten months, they are about equally divided between the two halves of the book, since the death of Agrippa occurred several months after the Passover, which was the starting point.

With the exception of the founding of the church in Antioch and the connected incident of the sending famine-relief to Jerusalem (11, 19-30), this whole section is devoted to two incidents in the story of Peter related with exceptional detail in most graphic style. They are, *first*, his inauguration of work for the conversion of the Gentiles (9, 32-11, 18), and, *second*, his miraculous deliverance from the sword of the persecutor (12, 1-24). These two elements appear to be both taken from the same source, a narrative whose hero is Peter, and whose author shows such minute acquaintance with conditions in the mother church that it is commonly designated the Jerusalem source. The intervening verses (11, 19-30) on the other hand may be attributed to a source whose interests centre at Antioch. But the two sections from the Jerusalem source would also seem to have been inverted in order by Luke. For Peter is clearly assumed to be in permanent residence at Jerusalem throughout chapter 12 down to the point where he takes leave of James and departs "to another place"; whereas in the story of 9, 32-11, 18, especially in the Western form of the text of 11, 1f.,<sup>15</sup> he is no longer a permanent resident of Jerusalem, but is occupied in visitation of "the saints" in "all parts" including Lydda, where the church already had its guild of "widows," and whence the whole plain of Sharon is evangelized (9, 35). Joppa, where "Simon the tanner" is Peter's host, and doubtless that of the church also, became his headquarters for so long a time that he is able to take "six brethren" from their number as his supporters and witnesses for the momentous occasions at Caesarea and Jerusalem (11, 12). It is true that we have no external means of dating the conversion of the centurion of the "Italian Cohort" stationed at Caesarea, since (as Torrey ap-

<sup>15</sup> The  $\beta$  text has: "And report came to the Apostles and to the brethren that were in Judaea that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. *Now Peter for a considerable time had wished to journey to Jerusalem. So when he had called the brethren unto him and had established them, making a long discourse, he (went) through the districts teaching them.* And when he was come up to Jerusalem," etc. Either the  $\alpha$  text obtains a closer adjustment to the context by trimming off the protruding corner (printed in italic) which still remained to resist a smooth bedding of the section in its new situation, or the  $\beta$  text shows consciousness of the duplication by imitating the parallels. Cf. 15, 2-3; 20, 17 ff.

pears to have shown in opposition to the present writer) the difficulties in the way of conceiving Cornelius in the situation here represented while the country was still under the rule of a (nominally) independent *socius rex* — difficulties which lead Preuschen to declare that the statement “must rest on some misunderstanding”<sup>16</sup> — are not insuperable. But there is further internal evidence for the transposition, and this has no unimportant bearing on our present enquiry.

Peter’s vision at Joppa, with the subsequent account of the planting of the gospel at Caesarea, and vindication of Peter’s course to the satisfaction of the authorities at Jerusalem even as to the question of “eating with the Gentiles” (11, 3), carries us far beyond the point of development reached by the general Lukan narrative. It is already a serious discrepancy that the source of 8, 40 (Antiochian?) attributes the beginnings of the church in Caesarea to Philip the evangelist; and this is confirmed by 21, 8, where Philip’s house in Caesarea becomes Paul’s abiding place. But in addition the revelation to Peter in the Jerusalem source is certainly not intended by the original writer for the restricted application made of it by the compiler. Peter is divinely instructed as to two things: *first*, That “God is no respecter of persons, but that in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him”; *second*, that his Jewish scruples against eating “anything common or unclean” are of human, not divine origin (10, 13–15), and should be no barrier to his “joining himself or coming unto one of another nation” (10, 28; *cf.* 11, 3). In other words we have a complete settlement on a basis more than Pauline in its liberalism of the entire question covered in the succeeding context from 11, 19 to 15, 29; and the settlement concerns not its first phase only (freedom of Gentiles from the Mosaic ordinances), but its second also (conduct of “the Jews which are among the Gentiles”). Thus all the great questions to whose working out the remainder of Acts is devoted already receive their authoritative and final decision by Divine revelation endorsed by official action of the mother church in this single story of how Peter planted the gospel among Gentiles in Caesarea.

<sup>16</sup> Commentary, *ad loc.* in the *Handbuch zum Neuen Testament*.



The settlements implied in the teaching of the vision that distinctions of meats are a human convention without warrant in the sight of the Creator <sup>17</sup> and in the vindication of Peter on the score of having gone in to men uncircumcised and eaten with them (11, 3) are certainly anticipations relatively to the story of Luke, as well as irreconcilable with the story of Gal. 2, 11-12. But in the relation in which they now stand to the persecution and death of Agrippa (12, 1-24) they are almost as flagrant anticipations in the Jerusalem source itself. It is only part of the truth to say that Peter in 9, 32-11, 18 has ceased to be domiciled at Jerusalem. Consideration of the extreme amplitude and detail with which Peter's call to preach the gospel to the Gentiles is here divinely sanctioned, and all objection silenced in a manner quite surpassing anything Paul could relate, makes it insupposable that the author continued by relating that after the Conclave <sup>18</sup> Peter merely settled down in Jerusalem until driven out by the persecution of Agrippa. The inference drawn by the Conclave, "Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life," looks forward to something greater. It is no more natural to think of Peter after all this going back and subsiding in Jerusalem to wait until Paul needs his testimony than it is to conceive the Council of Acts 15 settling all these questions over again after the Conclave of Acts 11, 1-18 has already settled them no less authoritatively and on a much broader basis. If, then, we place ourselves sympathetically at the original writer's point of view we shall see that *in the source* Peter after the Conclave must have followed the career implied in the utterance Luke himself places in his mouth in 15, 7: "Brethren, ye know how that God made choice among you that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe." Peter must not only have removed entirely from Jerusalem, taking his wife with him for extended journeys, as

<sup>17</sup> For the broad appeal to divine principles seen in nature as superior to the conventions of Mosaic law, such as the distinctions of meats, compare Mark 7, 1-23 and 10, 1-10. "What *God* hath cleansed make not *thou* common" is an utterance cast in the same mould as "Ye make the word of God of none effect that ye may keep your tradition," and "What *God* hath joined together let not *man* put asunder."

<sup>18</sup> The assembly of Acts 11, 1-18 is here distinguished from that of Acts 15, 1-35 by designating the former the Apostolic Conclave, the latter the Apostolic Council.

Paul expressly informs us in 1 Cor. 9, 5, but must have carried the gospel to the Gentiles in some such work of evangelization as is related in *The Preaching of Peter*, or in such an Apostolic progress to Caesarea and Antioch as the *Clementina* describe.

But granting that the Jerusalem source thus transferred to Peter the work which Paul tells us was explicitly recognized as his and not Peter's (Gal. 2, 7-9), why should it be necessary for Luke in employing it to make the alleged transposition? Try the experiment and the reason leaps to the eye. Place the two sections of the Jerusalem source in the order which consistency of internal development requires and the contradiction with the Antiochian source becomes unbearable. On the one side we shall have Jerusalem and the plain of Sharon from Joppa to Caesarea as the scene of expansion; on the other, Antioch and the provinces of Cyprus and South Galatia. On the one side a revelation of the Spirit sending Peter to the conversion of Cornelius; on the other a similar revelation sending Barnabas and Saul "to the work whereunto I have called them," which begins with the conversion of Sergius Paulus. On the one side a vindication of the evangelization of Gentiles by Peter accompanied by the "six brethren" of his new foundations in the plain of Sharon before the Jerusalem Conclave; on the other a vindication of it by Paul and Barnabas accompanied by "certain other" of the Antioch church before the Jerusalem Council. On the one side a settlement of the question on what terms a Jewish believer may "eat and associate" with "one of another nation" by deed and word — action corresponding to Peter's when he "ate with the Gentiles" at Antioch disregarding 'distinctions of meats' as man-made, coupled with a sweeping declaration that "God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to Him"; on the other a settlement of it on the basis of the four "decrees" of abstinence; which aim to protect the entire body, Jewish and Gentile, from the "pollutions of idols," and which imply the continued validity of the distinctions (ἐπ' ἀνάγκης). On all points save the last it is the Antioch source which is substantially in the right, and the Jerusalem source which by the inexpugnable witness of the Pauline Epistles is in the wrong.

But it is simply inconceivable that any compiler should attempt to place the rival accounts of the great transition side by side, heedless of their flagrant inconsistencies. Unaltered, the two sources were incompatible. For such a compiler as Luke the remedy was self-evident. The course of Peter as related in the Jerusalem source must be in the main admitted (*cf.* 1, 8), but restricted in its application and treated as a mere precedent, pigeon-holed (as it were) until required for the ultimate solution. In short it was simply unavoidable that the story of expansion to the Gentiles in Acts 9, 32–11, 18 should be transposed, in spite of all its surviving implications of later and larger application, to the earlier time and more limited significance of Peter's occasional excursions from Jerusalem. The joint official action of Antioch and Jerusalem in the Apostolic Council must be, to Luke, the supreme and final settlement.

This admission of the claims of the Jerusalem source to the extent of conceding to Peter precedence over Paul as *inaugurator* of Gentile evangelization, while the actual work is *carried out* by Paul, involved Luke in two assumptions, both of which are flatly contradicted by Paul, and are more or less inconsistent with Luke's extracts from the sources themselves. *First*, he was obliged to transfer to Peter that title which was to Paul the very heart of his commission "not from men but from God," the title and commission of "Apostle to the Gentiles." Luke puts in Peter's (!) mouth the words, "God made choice among you (the Twelve) that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe." Paul is for him only the great "vessel of the Spirit" destined (when the way has been opened and the time is ripe) to carry on the work in partnership with Barnabas as commissioned evangelist<sup>19</sup> of the church in Antioch. *Second*, Luke was also obliged to deny to Paul any attempt to evangelize Gentiles until after Barnabas had brought him to Antioch, and the two had been officially "appointed to the work whereunto God had called them." Such admissions as he makes

<sup>19</sup> The title "Apostles" is restricted in Acts to the Twelve, and its conditions are so defined in 1, 21, 22 as to exclude Paul. The only exceptions are two references in the Antioch Source (14, 4, 14); but here Barnabas shares it with Paul showing that the missionaries are so called only in the ordinary sense, as 'delegates' of the Antioch church.

of preaching to the Gentiles before this time (Peter's special authorization excepted) are at least treated as questionable and unauthorized, if not denied altogether.<sup>20</sup> As we shall see, he appears even to have altered the reading of the Antioch source in 11, 20 to reach this result; while his treatment of the Hellenistic missions in his second 'panel' (chapter 8) is such as to indicate a determination to exclude if possible any actual admission of "men uncircumcised." How completely this puts his story in contradiction with Paul's own account in Gal. 1, 11-24 and 2, 1-10 needs no reiteration here. But the readers for whom Luke wrote were not supposed to consult Galatians; and if moderns do, they are quite content for the most part to do so with a veil upon their understanding, which whensoever Luke is read remaineth unlifted. On the other hand if Luke had carried his concessions to the Jerusalem source to the extent of adopting unaltered its representation of how the gospel was actually carried to the Gentiles he might perhaps have avoided contradicting Paul on the question of the "decrees" as the basis of protection from the "pollutions of idols"; but he would have robbed him of all that remained of his title to be called the Apostle to the Uncircumcision, and would have deprived Antioch of its chief glory as being the mother church of Gentile Christianity. As a compiler of discrepant sources, both of which obviously commanded high respect, and without access (as it would appear) to the great Epistles, it is difficult to see how Luke could have performed his task with greater skill or greater loyalty to each of his two great heroes.

We have again been compelled to digress at considerable length to the question of Luke's relation to his sources. But the bearing of the preceding considerations upon the Chronological Scheme of Acts will be at once apparent. Acts 12, 1-24 considered for itself alone, without reference to the preceding paragraph 11, 19-30 taken from the Antiochian source, would naturally be understood to cover a period of something over three years, viz., from Claudius' bestowal upon Agrippa of the authority, title, and territory of his grandfather, Herod the Great, early in 41, to the death of Agrippa in the (late?) summer of 44.

<sup>20</sup> See below, p. 155.

This may be somewhat obscured by the paragraphing in our printed texts and the sixteenth-century division into verses; but ancient texts such as the Codex Laudianus at Oxford make the division into lessons fall in the middle of 12, 19, the twenty-ninth lesson ending with the words "commanded that they should be put to death," and the thirtieth beginning, "Now he went down from Judaea to Caesarea and tarried there." Manifestly it was fully appreciated in ancient times that the story (apart from the editorial setting) assumes an interval of some length between the account of the crime against God's people and the judgment which ultimately befell the wrong-doer. In narrative for purposes of edification much longer intervals than this may be passed over without record for the greater sharpening of the moral, as when Hegesippus makes the besieging of Jerusalem by Vespasian follow "immediately" upon the martyrdom of the other James. Those authorities who, with Harnack, have perceived that in 12, 1 ff. the (original) writer is describing (quite correctly) the initial policy of Agrippa on his accession to power in Jerusalem, viz., an obsequious attempt to win the favor of the Pharisees without incurring too much obloquy from other elements or provoking Roman intervention, are on safer ground than those who date the persecution at the very end of Agrippa's reign; whether to reduce the discrepancy with the mention of the famine in 11, 27-30, or because they can see no room for an interval after 12, 19a. But the compiler of Acts as it now stands, if he has arranged the story of Petrine activity in its first half to cover three periods of five years each, undoubtedly intends his third rubric (12, 24) to mark the fifteenth year from the date assumed for the crucifixion. His introduction of a paragraph (11, 19-30) on the beginnings of Christianity in northern Syria is doubtless due to his desire to include within this period of the spread of the gospel from Gaza to the Taurus the founding and early years of the great church of Antioch. But his suppression of all deliberately purposed undertakings of Gentile evangelization until Antioch sends forth Saul and Barnabas on the First Missionary Journey (Acts 13, 1 ff.) is more than a forced harmonistic device for the adjustment of conflicting sources. It coincides with Luke's own heart-felt conviction emphatically ex-

pressed throughout his work, and wide-spread in many forms in ancient Christian apologetic, that opportunity must first be given to the Jews to hear the message and repent, before it was right to "turn to the Gentiles." Ancient tradition, traceable to a period contemporary with Acts if not older, even specifies the duration of this special *locus poenitentiae* accorded to Israel. In a fragment of the so-called *Preaching of Peter* quoted by Clement of Alexandria, Jesus after the resurrection commands the Twelve as he sends them forth: "If any man of Israel willeth to repent and put his trust in God through the efficacy of my name, his sins shall be forgiven. *After twelve years* go forth into the world, that no man may say (in excuse), We did not hear." <sup>21</sup> Harnack is surely correct in maintaining that this tradition has not been without its influence upon the Lukan postponement of work among the Gentiles till the First Missionary Journey.

We need scarcely invite renewed attention to Luke's well-known inconsistency on this score with Paul. Galatians informs us with the greatest emphasis that from the moment of his conversion Paul had given himself systematically and exclusively to the conversion of the Gentiles. Acts describes all his work up to the time of his appointment by the church in Antioch as limited on principle to Greek-speaking *Jews*. It requires a special vision in the temple according to Acts 22, 17-21 to dissuade Paul from his attempt to labor in Jerusalem. According to Acts 9, 29, 30 he yielded only to mob violence when finally driven to take refuge first in Caesarea and thereafter in Tarsus. Even here nothing is said of work among Gentiles. Paul merely remains in hiding until summoned by Barnabas to Antioch. Luke goes so far, apparently, as to alter the reading of his source in 11, 20; for the context makes it quite obvious that the "men of Cyprus and Cyrene" who carried

<sup>21</sup> Clem. Alex. *Strom.* vi, 5, 43. Von Dobschütz, who edits the fragments in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, xi, 1 dates the work so early as 90 A.D. The embodied tradition is probably older. It appears in several diverse forms (see Harnack, *Chronologie*, i, 243 f., 472 f.). In Harnack's judgment 90 A.D. is too early for the *Preaching* (which, however, he would admit to be identical with the *Teaching* (Doctrina) of Peter quoted according to Origen by Ignatius (*Smyrn.* 3, 2), but the "twelve year" tradition, which is calculated to end in A.D. 41 or 42 (persecution of Agrippa) "may well be historical" (p. 244).

the gospel to Antioch in the "tribulation that arose about Stephen" did *not* confine themselves to evangelizing Greek-speaking Jews ('Ελληνισταί), but "spoke to the Greeks ('Ελληνες) also." So clearly is this sense required by the context that all the later manuscripts, the ancient versions, and even modern translators adopt the reading "Greeks"; although the textual evidence is convincing that Luke actually wrote "Greek-speaking Jews" ('Ελληνιστάς) as his theory requires.<sup>22</sup> We may conclude, then, that he means the great transition to be marked by the persecution and death of Agrippa, both of which are related between the coming and going of Paul and Barnabas, and are immediately followed by the story of how they with Mark, whom they had brought with them from Jerusalem, were sent out on the First Missionary Journey. After this crisis in Jerusalem, Antioch, through these its commissioned agents, became the mother-church of Gentile Christianity. Luke's date for this turning point of Christian history, is, as we have seen, *fifteen* years from the crucifixion. That of his source was the traditional *twelve*. The difference arises from the fact that the Jerusalem source takes the persecution which resulted in the death of James, imprisonment of Peter, and affliction of others in the church, as marking the limit. As in the Antiochian source the martyrdom of Stephen and connected "afflictions" had spread the gospel abroad (8, 1, 4; 11, 19) so also in the Jerusalem source. The cup of Israel's obduracy is now made full and Peter is free to go "to another place" (12, 17).<sup>23</sup> Luke, on the other hand takes the death of the persecutor as his terminal point. The source, as Harnack has seen, contemplates a date shortly after the accession of Agrippa, early in 41, or, in other words "twelve years" after the crucifixion.<sup>24</sup> Luke knows, of

<sup>22</sup> See B. B. Warfield, 'The Readings "Έλληνες and 'Ελληνιστάς in Acts 11, 20,' *Journal of Biblical Literature*, iii, 113-127.

<sup>23</sup> An exodus of members of the conservatively minded Jerusalem church after the death of James in 41-42 falls in very well with Paul's reference in Gal. 2, 4 to the incoming of "false brethren who came in privily to spy out the liberty in Christ Jesus" enjoyed by Gentile Christians in Syria and Cilicia, an invasion which soon led (in 45?) to his appeal to the Pillars and the resulting Compact (Gal. 2, 1-10; cf. 6, 12).

<sup>24</sup> The source probably counts from Passover to Passover (cf. 12, 4), and therefore aims at an exact fulfilment of the traditional "twelve years." It is possible, however,

course, that Agrippa's death took place in the summer of 44, and assumes that the persecution to which it was the wrathful answer of God was but shortly before. Both source and compiler probably make Passover 29 A.D. their point of departure.

There would seem thus to be no doubt of Luke's intention to take the year 44 as the terminus for his third 'panel'; nor have we adequate reason to think of either more or less than five years as his conception of its duration.

4. If the theory we are testing be correct, the period between Acts 12, 24 (third rubric) and 16, 5 (fourth rubric), covering the First Missionary Journey and Settlement of the Mosaic Controversy, is also a period of approximately five years in the intention of the author.<sup>25</sup> The reason for the placing of the fourth rubric after the visit of Paul and Silas to the churches of the First Missionary Journey, instead of immediately at the close of the Jerusalem Council, is, of course, that the author follows the model of 11, 1 ff. in making the Council take its origin from this missionary adventure, instead of from the differences at Antioch whose beginnings are referred to in 11, 22, and whose culmination is described by Paul in Gal. 2, 11-13. The episode is therefore not complete until Paul and Silas have distributed the Council's "decrees" to these churches "for to keep" (Acts 16, 4). The decrees themselves, which solve the whole question of Jewish-Christians eating and associating with Gentile-Christians not subject to the Mosaic ordinances, by protecting both parties from "the pollutions of idols," are limited in their address to "the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia." They are *not*, therefore, intended for the distribution which Luke reports, and which is so notoriously difficult to reconcile with Paul's own settlement of the vexed question. The address calls for a slightly earlier date, before this important new province (South Galatia) had come into the foreground. We may reasonably suppose that they were drawn up at Jerusalem, at the instance of James, to meet the situation

that the Passover of the persecution is intended to be that of Agrippa's *second* year (42), in which case we reach a date for the crucifixion (A.D. 30) in better accord with the data of astronomy and the Jewish calendar system.

<sup>25</sup> Turner (*op. cit.* p. 422a) makes it end *ca.* November 1, 48; Ramsay (*Church in the Roman Empire*, pp. 65-73) in July 49.



created by the conduct of Peter at Antioch on the visit which Luke passes over in silence, but which Paul relates as occurring shortly after his compact with the 'Pillars' at Jerusalem. Of this visit we obtain a hint even in Acts; for Acts itself relates Mark's return to Jerusalem from Perga, midway of the First Missionary Journey, and mentions his renewed presence in Antioch just before the Second Journey (Acts 15, 37-38); but it fails to explain why, how, or with whom, he went from Jerusalem a second time to Antioch. We infer that it was with Peter.

At Antioch Peter adopted first the Pauline interpretation of the agreement with the 'Pillars,' that "the Jews which are among the Gentiles" shall be "as without the law," disregarding entirely the Mosaic distinctions, since the law as a whole is "done away in Christ." But the consequences of this example would be fatal to Jewish Christian 'purity' outside of Palestine itself. Wherever believing Jews found themselves "among the Gentiles" they would be "compelled" to Hellenize. Some sort of action at Jerusalem giving authoritative expression to the interpretation the Pillars put upon the Compact <sup>26</sup> was absolutely imperative if any hold whatever was to be retained upon "the Jews which are among the Gentiles." The Pillars' interpretation was entirely simple and intelligible: Gentiles are free from the law; Jews are bound. The natural — the unavoidable inference for men who did not appreciate or accept Paul's peculiar doctrine of "dying to the law" — was that some concession must be made by the "brethren which are of the Gentiles." Abstinence was "necessary" (*ἐπ' ἀνάγκης*) from at least the four <sup>27</sup> things which involve "the pollutions of idols." Peter's action at Antioch called forth a delegation "from James" so authoritative as to overawe even Peter (*φοβούμενος τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς*), but who at the same time bore injunctions so plausible as to carry with them "even Barnabas" as well as "all the rest of the Jews" and (apparently) the entire Antioch church.

<sup>26</sup> We designate as the Compact the agreement described in Gal. 2, 6-10 as sealed by "right hands of fellowship."

<sup>27</sup> Three, if "things strangled" be a gloss.

We can find no other situation so perfectly adapted as this crisis of Peter's "eating with the Gentiles" at Antioch for the convening of the Jerusalem Council, which according to Acts 15, 12-35 makes final settlement of the entire question of the relations of Jews and Gentiles in the Church. It is true that neither Peter (whose conduct was in dispute), Paul, nor Barnabas can have been present; as indeed we cannot imagine Paul consenting to the compromise, or even recognizing the right of the Jerusalem leaders to "lay burdens," whether "greater" or smaller, upon his Gentile converts. Paul might well ignore the whole proceeding both in Galatians and later when minutely treating the whole subject for the Corinthians (1 Cor. 8-10), and less fully for the Romans (Rom. 14-15). On the other hand neither Peter, Barnabas, nor the church at Antioch would be likely to regard such action "from James" as *ultra vires*, since nothing more is intended than an application of the Compact as they must certainly have understood it <sup>28</sup> to the specific case which had arisen through Peter's coming to Antioch. Least of all should we be surprised to find an Antiochian writer such as Luke, dependent upon Antiochian and Petrine sources, ignoring the unpleasantness which had taken place between his two principal heroes, and treating the Jerusalem Council as responsible for a complete settlement of the entire question, wholly satisfactory to all the parties concerned except the unauthorized advocates of circumcision who had "troubled (the Gentile believers) with words subverting their souls." As regards date, the Council falls toward the close of the fourth 'panel,' the distribution of the "decrees" in the cities of the First Missionary Journey being the last event narrated before the refrain of 16, 5. On the theory now in question this would correspond to the year 48 A.D. Such possible reference as may be found in Gal. 2, 12 to the same assembly presents no chronological obstacle. So far as the modern chronographer can judge, A.D. 44-49 appears to be unexceptionable as a date for this period, whether as regards the time needful for the incidents

<sup>28</sup> In the period of Augustine the understanding of the compact of Gal. 21, 1-10 is still correct: Gentiles qui in Christo credidissent legis onere liberos, eos autem qui ex Judaeis crederent legi esse subjectos.

narrated as the author would be apt to view them, or absolutely, as fitting in with the course of events as otherwise known.<sup>29</sup>

No other external data are available for the period save the famine, already considered.

5. In the fifth period, marked off by the rubrics of Acts 16, 5 and 19, 20, Luke is more generous than hitherto with indications of the lapse of time. It is the period of the founding of the Greek churches, with Corinth and Ephesus as the chief centres of Pauline evangelization. Acts 18, 11 informs us that "a year and six months" was the length of Paul's stay in the former centre, and Acts 19, 10 gives "two years" as the length of time for the evangelization of "all that dwelt in Asia" from the latter. In the speech of farewell to the Ephesian leaders at Miletus Paul sets "three years" as the period during which they had had opportunity to test his character. This doubtless is intended to include the "three months" of work in the synagogue before Paul "separated the disciples" (19, 8), and perhaps also the interval between his first coming (18, 19) and his return from a journey to Syria (18, 21-23). If we estimate at six months the time spent on the missionary journey through Macedonia and Achaia (Acts, 16, 6-17, 34), we shall probably do no injustice to Luke's intention. In Turner's reckoning the period covers almost exactly five years.<sup>30</sup> By absolute dating we should reach practically the same results starting from spring of 50 A.D. as the date for the Apostle's arrival at Corinth required by the Delphi inscription.

6. The starting point for the last period of Luke's story is Paul's departure from Ephesus for a final tour of confirmation of the Greek churches before the fatal journey to Jerusalem. If he really has a five-year division in mind it must extend, then, from A.D. 54 to A.D. 59. Now the journey to Macedonia and Achaia (19, 21), may be assumed to begin about Pentecost, as 1 Cor. 16, 8 shows to have been Paul's intention. It is followed the next winter by "three months" in Corinth (20, 3).

<sup>29</sup> The years 51 and 52 are not possible for the proconsulship of Sergius Paulus (Turner, *op. cit.*).

<sup>30</sup> From Passover A.D. 50 to the spring, A.D. 55, *op. cit.* p. 422a and b.

The earlier months of the next year (55 up to "Pentecost"; 20, 16) are spent on the journey to Jerusalem. They are followed by "two years" of captivity in Caesarea (24, 27) counting from "twelve days" after Pentecost A.D. 55 (Acts 24, 11). The prison days in Caesarea extend till the coming of Festus in 57. As Luke speaks only of intervals of "days" ("three days," verse 1, "eight or ten days," verse 6, "certain days," verse 13, "many days," verse 14) after the coming of Festus it is natural, though perhaps not necessary, to assume that he understands the journey to Rome, which began shortly before "the Fast," *i.e.*, about October 1, to have been undertaken the same year (A.D. 57). In this case Paul's arrival in Rome would fall early in A.D. 58 (Acts 28, 11-13). After this we hear of a period of "two whole years" during which he is permitted to occupy his own hired house without molestation, but no special event is mentioned as its terminus, and the book ends without a repetition of the summarizing rubric. It is possible, therefore, that there was less care in this case to make the division fall just five years before the end. At all events the numerous data cannot easily be put together without reaching a total of thirty years and nine months, bringing the story down to a final absolute date about February 1, A.D. 60.

To all this, external synchronisms such as the recall of Felix<sup>31</sup> (A.D. 55-56 Harnack, 57-58 Turner) offer no obstacle. But what must be our verdict upon the proposal of Cadoux to regard the summaries of Acts as intended to divide the story into periods of five years each?

The fact that the closing periods of the two halves of the book bring us to points some months later than the starting point should be a warning not to look for a mechanical and rigid framework. It would have been easy for a compiler who desired to bring his material into such a Procrustean bed to count back from his closing date in such a manner as to make Paul's departure from Corinth (Acts 20, 3) the dividing line, and thus obtain a more exact proportion. The fact that he

<sup>31</sup> The reference in Acts 24, 10 to Felix, "many years as judge of this people," may well include the period before his sole procuratorship, when he shared its responsibilities with Cumanus.

chooses rather the Apostle's departure from Ephesus, including the journey of confirmation through Macedonia and Achaia in the last 'panel,' shows that he prefers to group his material with reference to contents; for the preceding 'panel,' which began with the setting forth of Paul and Silas from the territory evangelized on the First Missionary Journey, is occupied throughout with the story of the founding of the Greek churches on both sides of the Aegean. On the other hand the Jerusalem Council (48) would have been a more natural terminus had he not really wished to complete the pentad from 44. At the lower limit the refrain of 19, 20 is followed by a proleptic forecast of the remainder of the story in 19, 21, giving conclusive evidence that to Luke's mind the new phase of Paul's activity represented by the journeys first to "Macedonia and Achaia," then "to Jerusalem," finally to "Rome," begins at this point.

On the whole it can hardly be accidental that the main division at 12, 24 so nearly subdivides the work chronologically into two parts of approximately fifteen years each, while each of these halves falls into three equal parts through the refrains of 6, 7 and 9, 31; 16, 5 and 19, 20. In all these cases five years is a probable allowance of time for the events narrated, and in those which we can best control the dates are found almost exact. If with Turner we take A.D. 29 to be Luke's starting point he will probably have set the crucifixion one year too early; but his central date, terminating the work of Peter, will extend but a very few months beyond the total of fifteen years, while 34 and 39 A.D. will be entirely appropriate termini for the periods of the founding of the mother-church in Jerusalem and of the spread of the gospel through "Judaea, Galilee, and Samaria" respectively. For the duration of the work of Paul described in the second half of the book Turner thinks it possible to fix "a period of fourteen years, certainly not less, and apparently not more." For this, however, he takes as the starting point not the rubric itself of 12, 24, but the appointment of Paul and Barnabas to their work of Gentile evangelization in 13, 2, making at this point "a considerable interval" to allow for the 'famine-relief' visit, which had been placed too early by Luke, and must necessarily come after (according to

Turner two years after) the death of Agrippa. This "considerable interval" must therefore be added to the period "certainly not less and probably not more than fourteen years" which in Turner's judgment represents the duration of the three 'panels' of the second half.

But it is not our present problem to determine the correctness or incorrectness of Luke's order. Our primary question is only whether, taking the story as he relates it, the events of 12, 25-28, 31 would reasonably fall within the compass of fifteen years. Since no such allowance as the several years assigned by Turner, but at most a few months are required for the interval between 12, 24 and 13, 2, we may take fifteen years as a very close approximation, perhaps the closest possible, to the period of time the historian had actually in mind. In addition we have already seen that the story of the founding of the Greek churches, closed by the rubric of 19, 20, covers as nearly as possible five years, and that of the beginnings of missions to the Gentiles, closed by the rubric of 16, 5, approximately the same period. It is difficult to deny the probability that the compiler of the work has really intended these divisions to mark some such periods of time.

The further question whether the Lukan chronology agrees with the Pauline, and how the data on both sides are to be adjusted to external dates with reference to obtaining an absolute chronology, is matter for later consideration. The preliminary step is perhaps not ill-advised of determining the chronological structure of Acts, taken as the author himself would appear to have conceived it. From the point of view thus defined the datings of salient events would seem to be substantially as follows:

Crucifixion . . . . .	A.D. 29
Death of Stephen . . . . .	34
Conversion of Paul . . . . .	38
Escape from Damascus . . . . .	38
Famine . . . . .	about 44
Death of Agrippa . . . . .	44
Visit of Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem . . . . .	44-45
First Missionary Journey . . . . .	45-47
Jerusalem Council . . . . .	48
Second Missionary Journey . . . . .	49-51

Paul's Arrival in Corinth . . . . .	January-March	A.D. 50
Three years in 'Asia' . . . . .		51-54
Winter in Corinth . . . . .	January-March	55
Arrest in Jerusalem . . . . .	May	55
Imprisonment in Caesarea . . . . .		55-57
Recall of Felix . . . . .		57
Departure for Rome . . . . .	October	57
Arrival at Rome . . . . .	January-February	58
End of "two years" of semi-liberty . . . . .	February	60